Invitation
TO A GOOD TIDINGS

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دعـــوة وبشـــرى
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From the book
"In the Shade of Qur'an"

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بسم اللہ الرحمن الرحیم

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Praise be to Allah, the Lord of worlds; peace and blessings of Allah be upon His messenger Muhammad, the trustworthy guide, and upon his family, his companions and those who follow his guidance till the Day of Judgment. The Holy Qur'an starts with *Surah Al-Fatiha*, the greatest *surah*, and is followed by *Surah Al- Baqarah*, which classifies people into three general categories, as follows:

1-The first category are the believers, as mentioned in four verses in the said *Surah (Al-Baqara).*

2-The second one is the disbelievers, as mentioned in two verses thereof.

3-The third one is the hypocrites, their features are mentioned in thirteen verses thereof. Commenting on these said verses, Al-Sheikh Sayed Kutub pointed out in his book "In The Shade of Qur'an" that by mentioning these three categories,

Allah orders mankind to select the straight path, which is totally pure (monotheistic), beneficial, ethical, successful, and dutiful - this is the character of the righteous.

Al-Sheikh Sayed Kutub (may Allah have mercy upon him) was exceptionally skillful in interpretation of the Holy Qur'an and when he came to the verse, "O mankind! Worship your Lord, Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become pious" [1] which came after mentioning the three categories, the believers, disbelievers and hypocrites. The way to straight guidance and to gain knowledge of the oneness of Allah and not joining others in worship with Allah, as clarified in the verse "...Then do not set up rivals unto Allah (in worship) while you know that He alone has the right to be worshipped" [2]. A rival is a contestant or emulator, this applies on every

[1] *Surah Al- Baqarah*, verse (21)
[2] *Surah Al- Baqarah*, verse (22)

illegal religious offensive, based on the type of offensive which could be as great as worshiping others with Allah, the Greatest. The worshiping others with Allah comes in three levels: Major, Minor and Hidden.

Let the noble reader with the interpretation of the clear verses be guided and directed to the straight way and explore faith through with sweet and bright interpretation from the book "In the Shade of the Qur'an". Allah says the truth and He guides people to the straight path.

Allah says, "O Mankind! Worship your Lord who created you and those who were before you so that you may become the pious. Who has made the earth a resting place for you, and the sky as a canopy, and sent down rain from the sky and brought forth therewith fruits as a provision for you. Then do not set up rivals unto Allah (in worship) while you know that He Alone has the right to be worshipped" [3]

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[3] *Surah Al- Baqarah*, verse (21) & (22)

It is the call to mankind as a whole to worship Allah who has created them and those who were before them. Allah and no other god than He can create, so only He is to be worshipped. The worship has its own goal to be reached and achieved.

"...So that you may become the pious" [4] so you become the chosen category of mankind. The category is of Allah's worshippers, dutiful to Him. The worshippers must observe their duty to the Creator, they worship only the Creator, the Lord of the present and the past, and the Creator of mankind, provided to them from the earth and sky without a rival nor emulator.

"Who has made the earth a resting place..." [5] : is an expression which points to the ease of human life on this earth and preparing it for them to be a comfortable residence, a protected asylum as a resting place. People forget the said resting place which is duly pre-

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[4] *Surah Al- Baqarah*, verse (21)
[5] *Surah Al- Baqarah*, verse (22)

pared by Allah as they get familiar with it. They forget such harmony which Allah has established on the earth to facilitate earning of living and inhabiting hereon. They also forgot Allah furnished it with means of easy and comfortable living.
Without this harmony, their lives would not exist on this planet with such ease and comfort. If one of the living elements was missing from this planet, those people would not exist without an environment providing them with life. And if an element was excluded from the known components of air, then people will find it hard to get a breath even if they are supposed to live!

"...the sky as a canopy..." [6] It has a durability and coordination which related to any regular structure. Happiness has a firm relationship with the life of people on earth and with the ease of this life. The sky with its heat, light, gravity, harmony and other proportions with the earth pave and support

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[6] *Surah Al- Baqarah*, verse (2)

life on earth. No wonder that this will be mentioned while reminding people with the capability of the Creator and His favors thereof, as well as the obligation of created worshippers have to worship Allah.

"...sent down rain from the sky and brought forth therewith fruits as a provision for you."[7] Allah mentioned that sending down rain from the sky and bringing forth therewith fruits and repeatedly mentioned in many places in the Holy Qur'an, in order to remind worshippers of the abilities and blessings of Allah. Furthermore, the water sent down from the sky is the main life-giving ingredient for all creatures on the earth. Life in all forms and at all levels originated from water "...And We have made from water every living thing."[8]. Whether water directly causes growth of plants when it is mixed with soil, or fresh water formed both rivers and lakes, or such fresh water penetrates the layers of

[7] *Surah Al- Baqarah*, verse (22)

[8] *Surah Al- Anbiya*, verse (30)

earth forming underground water, which either erupts forming springs or wells are drilled and water is brought by pumps to the surfaces once more.

That water cycle on the earth and its role in people's lives and the dependence of life on water in all its forms and shapes is undeniable. Therefore it is enough to imply about it and remind (people) with it in the process of calling to worship of the Creator, the Provider and the Donator.

The call to worship Allah follows two Islamic theories: the oneness of the Creator of all creation, as highlighted in "...who created you and those who were before you..." [9] and the oneness of the universe as well as its harmony among its components and its friendship with life and human beings "Who has made the earth a resting place for you, and the sky as a canopy, and sent down rain from the sky and brought forth therewith

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[9] *Surah Al- Baqarah*, verse (21)

fruits as a provision for you..." [10] The earth of this universe is paved for human beings, and its sky is built with precision, provides water with which fruits are grown and donated to people, thanks to the only Creator.

"Then do not set up rivals unto Allah (in worship) while you know (that He alone has the right to be worshipped)." [11]Of course, you know that Allah has created you and those who were before you and you know that He has made the earth a resting place and the sky as a canopy and sent down water from the sky. He has neither partner to help nor a rival to oppose Him. After knowing this, it is religiously unacceptable to worship others with Allah. As per the Qur'an, rivals must not be worshipped so as to purify the belief in the oneness (of Allah). The worshipping of others with Allah could be in a naïve form as done by the disbelievers in the past, or take other hidden forms such as to

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[10] *Surah Al- Baqarah*, verse (22)

[11] *Surah Al- Baqarah*, verse (22)

beg or fear others than Allah, or believe to be benefited or harmed by others besides Allah.

Narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas, "Rivals originated from worship others with Allah as unheard as ants' steps at night, as to swear with someone's life or with my own life. 'Unless there is a dog, the thieves will come to rob our house'. 'Unless there are ducks, the thieves will come to rob our house', a man says as 'Allah and you wishes!' a man says 'unless Allah and you' ...these sayings are considered disbelievers' expressions. As in another *hadeeth*, a man said to the Prophet Muhammad, the messenger of Allah (PBUH), "As Allah and you wishes", the Messenger (PBUH) said, 'You made me a rival to Allah'. This is the way the predecessors of this nation looked at the hidden worshipping of others with Allah. We look at where we are with high sensitivity and how far are we from the real great oneness.

The Jews were doubtful about the authenticity of the message of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), while the hypocrites were skeptical thereof and the same applied on the disbelievers who inhabited Makkah and other areas. In this context, the Qur'an challenges all these people by addressing all mankind using factual, practical and well-established experiences.

" And if you (Arab pagans, Jews and Christians) are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down (i.e the Qur'an) to our slave Muhammad (PBUH), then produce a *surah* of the like thereof and call your witnesses (supporters and helpers) besides Allah, if you are truthful" [12] Such a challenge begins with a valuable hint therein; the Qur'an describes the Messenger (PBUH) as a slave of Allah "And if you (Arab pagans, Jews and Christians) are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down (i.e the Qur'an) to our slave Muhammad (PBUH)...". This description

[12] *Surah Al- Baqarah*, verse (23)

therein has various and complete indications: First, it is an honor and a privilege to the Prophet (PBUH) to be a slave to Allah. This denotes that the slavery to Allah is the highest, prestigious place for people to be called upon as well as Muhammad (PBUH) to be called thereto. Secondly, it is affirming the meaning of slavery to Allah in calling people not to worship rivals but Allah. Here is the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), in position of the revealer-the highest place, was called to be a slave of Allah, which was an honor to him.

The said challenge was focused in the beginning of the *surah*. The sent Qur'an is made of the known Arabic alphabet which is familiar to them. If they are skeptical of it, then they are to produce a *surah* thereof and call their rivals to witness besides Allah. As Allah is the witness of the truthfulness of Muhammad's message.

Such challenge was and is still unarguably pending till the present. The Qur'an is

still unique and distinguishably different from people's speech and it will be so, conforming with Allah's saying. "But if you do it not, and you can never do it, then fear the Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers." [13]The challenge mentioned here is amazing; it is considered certainly an unachievable one. If it was deniable, they could not hesitate to entirely disapprove it (the Qur'an). There is no doubt that the Holy Qur'an confirmed the said challenge and they (the disbelievers) saw this challenge unmet as they admitted and described it as a unique miracle. There was an invitation before them and if they brought contrary evidence, then the Holy Qur'an would be proved false. On the contrary, this was and is, not the case as this challenge was to the past, present, and future generations. This is a final and historical word of separation (between truth and falsehood).

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[13] *Surah Al- Baqarah*, verse (24)

Whoever has a sense of speech patterns, whoever has significant experience with how people conceptualize being and things, and whoever is in touch with man-made regimes, ideologies, psychological and social theories has no doubt that what is explained in the Holy Qur'an concerning all these matters, is something else that cannot be made by human beings. This doubt will be made through either ignorance that is unable to discriminate or false purpose showing facts as delusions, therefore Allah threatens these disbelievers who neither meet the challenge nor believe in the Holy Qur'an: "But if you do it not, and can never do it, then fear the Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers". (13) We can ask ourselves why Allah has brought people and stones together in such horrible, terrifying way? Hell is prepared for disbelievers, as recited and described in the beginning of the *surah* ; Allah said, "Allah has set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing (i.e. they are

closed from accepting Allah's guidance), and on their eyes there is a covering." [14] As Allah put the challenge before them and they failed thereto, then they are in a human form but as deaf as stones, that is why the Almighty Allah has gathered stones (as real stones) and people (as deaf as stones) in the mentioned verse. It seems in this mentioned gathering, that the so-called stones in another horrible scene gives an impression to the soul that the fire is eating up stones in the scene crowded with people and stones all together in Hell. On the opposite side there is a scene in paradise awaiting the believers "And give glad things to those who believe and do righteous good deeds ,that for them will be gardens under which rivers flow (paradise). Every time they will be provided with a fruit therefrom, they will say, 'This what we were provided with before,' and they will be given things in resemblance (i.e. in the same form but different in taste) and

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[14] *Surah Al- Baqarah*, verse (7)

they shall have therein purified mates or wives, and they will abide therein forever." [15] This gives a good impression on how much paradise has of a wide variety of blessings, astonishing everyone. In addition to pure wives, alike fruits makes them think that they have had it before. The apparent similarity between the fruits of this life and those in Heaven, is probably by name or shape. Perhaps this apparent similarity and internal variety have an element of surprise for each time (when provided). This similarity in appearances and variety proves Allah's creation which makes the universe bigger in its reality than it looks.

Let's take man as a unique example to reveal this great fact. People are the same in the aspect of creation: head, body, limbs, flesh, blood, bones, nerves, two eyes, two ears, a mouth, a tongue and living cells. This composition has a similar appearance in form and materials. What is behind these features

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[15] *Surah Al- Baqarah*, verse (25)

and similarities? Then what is the purpose of their characteristics and their capabilities? The variation between one man and another, although both are similar, could be as far as the earth and the sky!

This Allah–made variation is beyond comprehension; the variation in types and in species, the variation in forms and features, and the variation in advantages and in characteristics- all are stemmed from one cell similar in content and arrangement. Who dares not to worship Allah alone when anyone can see this evidence in His creation and the signs of His ability? Who dares to worship rivals to Allah when His miracles are apparent to everyone? His miracles are every where, whether visible or invisible!

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